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not always avoid allegory. Though recent scholarship tells us that we must impute no allegorical meaning to certain scenes in Faust, and that we should, for example, regard the *Mitter* as a myth and not as an allegory, this teaching does not, of course, preclude the possibility of the presence of allegory in the drama. Moreover, the poet himself has confessed to the use of it in this work. When, in 1829, he and Eckermann were discussing the possibility of representing the *Mummenschanz* scene, Goethe evidently agreed with the latter's remark:

"Es ist doch eine Allegorie wie sie nicht leicht besser existiren möchte."<sup>1</sup>

The conversation then turned to the identity of the Boy Charioteer with Euphorion, and Goethe said, according to Eckermann:

"Der Euphorion ist kein menschliches, sondern nur ein allegorisches Wesen. Es ist in ihm die *Poesie* personificirt, die an keine Zeit, an keinen Ort und an keine Person gebunden ist."<sup>2</sup>

Prof. Eggert contends that the religious views that Gretchen's education had inculcated in her are also embodied in the *Böse Geist*. That is true so far as they were intended to guide and regulate conscience; they thus become a part of conscience, and so we get back to the same point, and our difference of opinion might be reduced to a difference in definition of conscience. The poet is charged, though, with committing "an artistic mistake," if he intended the *Böse Geist* only as the voice of conscience, for allowing the scene to take place in the cathedral and not in the privacy of her chamber. But the church is the place best calculated to arouse the voice of conscience, particularly in a person of Gretchen's faith, as Prof. Eggert's argument itself implies, when it makes the *Geist* reflect the training that she has received from the Church.

The further statement is made that Goethe evidently felt that he needed to give, at least in one scene, an outward form to the imaginary 'fiend' or 'tormentor' in whose existence Gretchen firmly believes, and, for this reason, he chose the *Geist* and the Cathedral scene.

<sup>1</sup> Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe*. Leipzig, 1885, ii, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 109.

Why give an outward form to the 'tormentor' in this scene? Why not everywhere, if at all? And, on the other hand, it is not reasonable to suppose that the *Geist* was intended to represent two things so totally different as Gretchen's conscience and the Devil.

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### With sorry grace, AND SIMILAR FORMS OF IMPRECATION IN CHAUCER.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES,

SIRS:—We beg to call attention to a certain group of expressions which, in our experience, are commonly misunderstood by students of Chaucer, or not understood at all. Yet—as far as we can see—commentators are usually silent about them. Moreover, the evidence of erroneous rendering or imperfect punctuation shows that editors and translators have stumbled over them only too frequently.

Perhaps a simple reference to Tyrwhitt, that old Chaucer expert, might settle the whole matter. But since the information on the point in question vouchsafed by the two most modern editors, Skeat and Pollard, is, in many cases, either inadequate (if not altogether lacking) or directly misleading, it may not be otiose to present here the phrases concerned, together with a brief comment.

1. *The proudest of thise ryotours three*  
*Answerde agayn, 'what?' carl, with sory grace,*  
*Why artow al forwrapped save thy face?*

C. 716 (*Pard. T.*).

Saunders, in his semi-modernized version, has: 'What! churl with sorry cheer!' Von Düring translates:

'Warum, bis auf dein trauriges Gesicht,  
 Verhüllst Du, Schuft, Dir Deinen Leib so dicht?'

2. *And whan this sytoure, with sory grace,*  
*Had filled with wynn his grete botels three,*

C. 876 (*Pard. T.*).

Skeat, in his Glossary, gives 'ill' as the meaning of *sory* in this passage; Corson (*Selections from Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*), 'ill, bad.' [=ill grace?]

3. *'... O nyce proude cherl, I shrewe his face!*  
*Lo, sires,' quod the lord, with harde grace,*  
*Who ever herde of swich a thing er now?*

D. 2227 (*Sonn. T.*).

Skeat's Glossary: 'displeasure, disgust.' The

same punctuation in Pollard's, Morris's, Bell's, and probably other editions which we are unable to consult here.

4. *This chanoun took his cole, with harde grace,*  
G. 1189 (*Chan. Yem. T.*).

Skeat, in his separate edition of *The Tale of the Man of Lawe, etc.*, renders *harde grace* by 'hardihood of demeanour, boldness,' but in his 'Oxford Chaucer' corrects it to 'ill luck (that is, a curse upon him).'

5. *This Eolus, with harde grace,*  
*Held the windes in distresse, Fame, 1586.*

Skeat: 'severity.' von Düring: 'höchst verdrüsslich.'

The first point to be noted in glancing over this list is, that *sory grace* and *harde grace* are used without appreciable difference. In fact, a various reading of the first passage is *harde*; one of the fourth passage, *sory*.<sup>1</sup> As *grace* is found in the sense of 'chance, luck,' and *faire grace* in that of 'good luck,' so *sory (harde) grace* denotes 'bad luck.' Cf. *so fair a grace*, C. 783; also *graceless* ('unfortunate'), G. 1078, *For which he hadde at Thebes sory grace*, D. 746 (Skeat's translation 'disfavour' is at any rate ambiguous); *ful of torment and of harde grace*, Parl. 65, etc. The use of *harde* in this phrase suggests the colloquial 'hard luck'; *sory* may remind us of 'a sorry plight,' 'a sorry spectacle.' Of interest is *in sory houre*, R. of Rose 1639, = *de fort hore* of the original.

*Harde (sory) grace* naturally appears in imprecations: *god yeve it harde grace*, G. 665. *Go, blow this folk a sory grace*, *Fame* 1790 shows a similar use, at least. (Cf. *god yeve him goode grace*, in the late Middle English *Tale of Gamelyn*, l. 268.)

Now the phrases *with sory grace*, *with harde grace*, to be taken parenthetically, serve exactly the same purpose; they may be translated by 'bad luck upon him, etc.' On the function of *with*, see Eienkel's *Streifzüge durch die mitttelenglische Syntax*, p. 224, where the better known *with meschaunce* is cited. It is significant that another variant of the first passage mentioned above is *with meschaunce*, and that in our fourth quotation *I schrewe his faas* is found as a various reading.

<sup>1</sup> As the Chaucer Society texts are out of reach, we have to rely on Pollard's edition of the *Canterbury Tales*.

In the third instance (D. 2227 ff.), the quotation mark has, accordingly, to be placed before *with harde grace*. It is evident that the lord is not 'displeased' or 'disgusted' at all; he enjoys the joke perpetrated on the friar immensely; and the strong language he uses certainly proves nothing to the contrary. The passage had been well explained by Tyrwhitt long ago.

Quite parallel are the expressions *with meschaunce*, *with sorwe*, *with yvel preef*.

Thus we find

- Is that a cook of London, with meschaunce?* H. 11;  
*Thus endeth olde Donegild with meschaunce*, B. 896;

D. 2215; H. 193; D. 1334 (*with mischaunce and with misaventure*); *Troil.* i, 117 (*lat your fadres treson goon/ Forth with mischaunce*—syntactically interesting), by the side of

*god yeve him meschaunce*, B. 4623.

Further

- But tel me this, why hydestow, with sorwe . . .*, D. 308;  
*That took his counseil of his wyf, with sorwe*, B. 4443;  
*And bad him go with sorwe and with meschaunce*, A. 4412;

by the side of

*god yeve me sorwe*, D. 151.

Also

- Thou comest hoom as dronken as a mous,*  
*And prechest on thy bench, with yvel preef*, D. 246.

(See Tyrwhitt's Glossary; also Schaible, *Deutsche Stich- und Hieb-Worte*, p. 55). Skeat translates *preef* by 'proof, assertion'; in Bell's Chaucer *ewil preef* is rendered by 'a defective proof'; Pollard, as usual, says nothing. The context does not seem to justify the meaning of 'proof,' as these lines are to be interpreted in connection with those immediately following. But *with yvel preef* in the sense of *with meschaunce* fits admirably. We notice *yvel preef* in the sense required, in *The Babees Book, etc.*, 39, 63:

- Have þou not to manye wordis; to swere be þou not leefe,*  
*For alle such maners comen to an yvel preef.*

Likewise, *good preef* = 'good fortune'—though Skeat explains *preef* simply as 'test, proof'—in

- For your good wil, sir, have ye right good preef*, G. 1379.

That in *all* the instances referred to we have to do with cases of malediction, would appear still more clearly from a comparison with similar phrases. They can easily be culled from Chaucer's large repertory of cursing formulas.

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